



Brigadier General George Washington Getty. (Kean Archives)

the lines, but no Confederate units attempted to cross the river.

OBVIOUSLY something had to be done to remove the menace of Fort Huger. Getty shifted two 20-pounders to a battery at Cahoon's Point, directly across the Nansemond from Fort Huger. Lamson persuaded Getty that it would be fairly simple to storm the small fort. The first attempt was made on the night of April 16-17. At 11 p.m. 200 of Getty's troops boarded the *Stepping Stones*. The men landed at 1 a.m. at a sheltered point on the opposite shore, but had only advanced fifty yards when they stumbled on a Confederate picket of four men. The pickets fired. The troops beat a hasty retreat to the ship and Lamson called off the attack since the enemy was now fully alerted.

General Peck, bottled up in Suffolk and completely ignorant of Longstreet's intentions, urged that the Navy regain control of the river. Cushing also pressed for an attack on Fort Huger. While the high command debated the point, the little river flotilla continued to suffer from the Confederate artillery fire. On the afternoon of April 17, the *Coeur de Leon*, another small sidewheel gunboat, came within easy range of the guns of Fort Huger. Stribling's battery blew off the vessel's pilot house and mortally wounded the pilot. The same day the *Alert* suffered a similar fate as three shells smashed into her pilot house and killed the pilot.

LAMSON made another attempt to seize Fort Huger on the night of April 18. The *Coeur de Leon* was to carry the 8th Connecticut Infantry up the river to get into the rear of the battery while parts of the 13th Indiana Infantry and 89th New York Infantry would storm the fort from the *Stepping*